

City of Zeeland

21 South Elm Street
Zeeland, MI 49464

(616) 772-6400
FAX (616) 772-5352

September 5, 2007

Mr. Ed Clemente, Chairman
New Economy and Quality of Life Committee
State of Michigan
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the New Economy and Quality of Life Committee,

I write to you today to emphasize the importance of House Bill No. 5123 to amend 2005 PA 210, the Commercial Rehabilitation Act.

Recently the City of Zeeland has taken many large steps toward the revitalization of our community. The City is currently working toward a new city-wide marketing campaign, and within the past month has begun restructuring downtown development activities to follow the National Main Street approach. Within these efforts will come the creation of new events for the community, marketing and advertising tactics, and a tool box of local and state grants and incentives made available to Zeeland business owners. The City will use an assembly of these initiatives to both recruit and retain downtown merchants, new entrepreneurs, and enhance the overall business climate in Zeeland. Mapping out our local vision and marketing approach, the Commercial Rehabilitation Act, as it was intended to include all commercial property, was a necessary element in the package we are making available to local businesses.

Over the past month, as the City of Zeeland began to promote the Commercial Rehabilitation Act, I have received at least four inquiries from property owners who were interested in additional information on the CRA, which I was pleased to provide. However, the recent announcement that the Commercial Rehabilitation Act is limited to obsolete properties has disqualified each of the four interested parties, as well as the majority of commercial properties in Zeeland. If the Commercial Rehabilitation Act is not amended to change the obsolete qualification, it will be quite challenging to use the Act regularly as a recruitment and retention tool for the City of Zeeland, as we had intended.

Thank you for your time and dedication in addressing this matter and I ask and encourage you to pass House Bill No. 5123 to amend PA 210, the Commercial Rehabilitation Act.

Sincerely Yours,

Abigail deRoo
City Marketing Coordinator

Tim Klunder
City Manager